

address this amendment?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I have an idea that I will speak often tonight on this issue and I hope that I do not bore you and I hope I do not offend anyone either on the floor or in the lobby. It is not my intention to do so. It is my intention to try to enlighten and remind members of this body of some of the problems that we have known and attempted to address over the years in association with this problem. It has been 20 years since I first introduced the bill which created the Gasohol Committee which is a forerunner of the ethanol authority. A year ago I introduced a bill which would have abolished the ethanol authority, and most of my good friends and colleagues on this floor rose in righteous indignations and with some considerable degree of concern and said, after all, give them a chance to do that which is right and the implication being that maybe there is something less than honorable about my desire to put them out of business. It was my intention then, it is my intention now to try to hold the ethanol authority as nearly as possible to the goals that were outlined in 1986 when we created that authority. To a certain extent, perhaps, the Legislature is at fault that we have not been in as close touch with the authority as we should have been. Governor Kerrey, when discussing with myself and others, whether or not he would sign the bill expressed his deep concern that the fund would be raided by unethical individuals or institutions and cited the many examples that had occurred at the national level of just such an event. It was only after many days of soul-searching and after many of us had agreed very sincerely that we would guard against dissipation of the fund to improper channels that Governor Kerrey did agree to sign the bill. I discussed with him several times whether or not that was a mistake on his part or a mistake on my part to encourage him to sign it. Perhaps today's action will tell whether he was right in not wanting to sign the bill, or whether I was right in encouraging him to sign it. I have no problem with what Senator Wehrbein is talking about with one exception and that is how the funds are utilized. If, in fact, Senator Wehrbein, the fund were going to be utilized only for new production, I would perhaps consider your amendment, and I would perhaps support it. I cannot and will not support any such amendment so long as there is language in the bill, no matter how minuscule, that would allow funding to continue for existing production. To pay for existing production is exactly contrary to what the original intent of LB 1230 was. We were to encourage and enhance the production of